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SUBJECT: A/S DESUTTER'S COMPLIANCE DIPLOMACY VISIT TO ISRAEL

Classified By: DCM Luis G. Moreno, reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Assistant Secretary for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation (VCI) Paula DeSutter held consultations with GOI officials and Israeli think tanks October 30 as a part of her Compliance Diplomacy visit to the Middle East. The purpose of these consultations was to discuss the importance of verification and compliance with arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation treaties and agreements, and to share ideas and receive feedback on ways to better achieve effective verification and compliance. A/S DeSutter received a strategic tour of Jerusalem led by Begin-Sadat Center Director Efraim Inbar, then spoke before U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv's junior officers' New Professional Association as its first distinguished speaker, where she discussed the VCI Bureau's functions and goals. Other meetings during the visit included a call on U.S. Ambassador Cunningham, and a briefing on the new U.S. radar system deployed in Israel. End summary.

¶2. (U) For this visit to Israel, A/S DeSutter was accompanied by VCI Senior Advisor Julie Connor and VCI Officer Debora Fisher. U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv Political-Military Officer Jason Grubb also attended the Assistant Secretary's meetings.

COMPLIANCE DIPLOMACY DISCUSSIONS

¶3. (SBU) This visit to Israel was the last stop on a three-country Compliance Diplomacy swing through the Middle East. In each of her scheduled meetings, A/S DeSutter took care to review her Bureau's mandate, current compliance challenges facing the international community, and the status of Iran and North Korean compliance with international treaties and agreements.

¶4. (U) A/S DeSutter explained the three legislatively-mandated functions of the VCI Bureau: 1) assess other countries' compliance with arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation agreements and commitments; 2) develop verification measures for existing treaties and agreements and assess the verifiability of prospective agreements; and 3) serve as the policy community's liaison to the intelligence community on requirements to verify and assess compliance with arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation agreements and commitments. A/S DeSutter explained how the bureau was created and co-founded by Senators Biden and Helms. Although Senator Biden was generally in favor of arms control agreements and Senator Helms was against them, both agreed the only way such agreements would be of value is if we know whether or not other countries are cheating.

¶5. (U) A/S DeSutter noted that she has no direct counterparts

in any other country. As a result, a major objective of her Compliance Diplomacy outreach effort is to encourage other countries to assess states' compliance with their arms control obligations. She noted that many countries have the mistaken view that it is up to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to make compliance judgments. Rather, it is up to each State Party to make these assessments. She also noted that it is acceptable for countries to disagree with U.S. assessments and related policies, but it is not acceptable for other countries to oppose them simply because the U.S. has failed to explain the rationale behind them. This is an area she is trying to improve, she explained, by doing more to explain U.S. policies and positions - hence her Compliance Diplomacy trips.

¶6. (C) A/S DeSutter addressed special challenges to compliance, in particular Iran, North Korea, and Syria. She noted that her bureau, VCI, had the lead in removing WMD from Libya, but pointed out differences between the Libyan case and Iran and North Korea. She said that VCI has special responsibility as the USG lead for developing a verification regime for the dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. She discussed how previous U.S. policy in the 1990s relating to North Korea and the Agreed Framework resulted in benefits to the regime following treaty violations, and therefore was not a good model to follow for dealing with countries in noncompliance. Moreover, Iran and other states saw how the North Koreans were rewarded, and they are now playing the same game.

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¶7. (SBU) A/S DeSutter went on to note that the biggest challenge to verification and compliance was spelled out by Dr. Fred Ikle, the former ACDA Director, as early as 1961: after noncompliance is detected, what should the international community do about it? The world is now facing such a challenge with Iran, A/S DeSutter argued. Iran joined and used the NPT to acquire nuclear technology under the guise of a civilian nuclear program. For over 20 years it cheated and deceptively diverted this technology from civil uses to develop a nuclear weapons program. Now the international community is faced with the question of what it must do to bring Iran back into compliance. The choices and options for countries trying to bring other states back into compliance can be very painful, she said. For example, it is very difficult for a number of countries to implement sanctions against Iran. For Russia and some European countries, potential financial losses are much higher than for the United States. For those countries, costs in the short-term related to noncompliance sanctions are almost certainly greater than the costs to Iran. That is why there must be better awareness that what countries are being asked to do is hard, but it is worth the price in the long-term. Considering the challenges, the international community has done a pretty good job on Iran, and financial sanctions are helping, A/S DeSutter opined. However, we must do a better job of collectively shaming and shunning the Iranian leadership. Sanctions have helped to slow their nuclear program, but they have not stopped it or turned it around. We must come up with more tools to deal with violators such as Iran more effectively. Enforcement is necessary to achieve compliance. If we are not willing to bring countries back into compliance, A/S DeSutter noted, we should not even bother with verification.

MEETING WITH THE GOI INTERAGENCY

¶8. (U) In addition to discussing the Compliance Diplomacy points above, there were a number of related but unique issues raised in A/S DeSutter's October 30 meeting with Israeli government interagency officials. Chaired by Alon Bar, the Deputy Director General of the MFA for Strategic

Affairs, the meeting was attended by thirteen GOI officials from five different offices (the MFA, IAEC, MOD, IDF-IDI, and Prime Minister's Office).

¶9. (S) Regarding the North Korea verification package, the Israelis suggested the United States will have its hands tied when USG officials enter North Korea. A/S DeSutter responded that she was very pleasantly surprised when she saw the initial verification package for North Korea because it does provide for removing samples and undeclared site visits, with the consent of the DPRK. The U.S. intelligence community (IC) had argued in favor of challenge inspections "anywhere, anytime," but VCI had objected to that language because for challenge inspections to be effective inspectors have to know where to go. She argued that North Korea is a closed society, and it is very difficult to find anything. Even if you do know where to go and insist on going to that location, "you are logistically dependent upon them to get there." Inclusion in the agreement of such language would have provided a false sense of security.

¶10. (C) The Israelis were concerned that some of VCI's work carried the danger of exposing sources, and asked about VCI's relationship with the IC. A/S DeSutter pointed out that VCI is a strong advocate for the IC. VCI is dependent upon intelligence and has great interest in protecting it. A/S DeSutter invited the Israelis to come have discussions with her and VCI staff the next time they visit Washington as the Bureau relies on information from all sources.

¶11. (C) Bar stated that verification is a strongly politicized process; to make the process work, legal agreements are required. A/S DeSutter responded that just because there is no agreement does not mean there is no obligation. She also pointed out that at times not having an agreement is better than having an agreement that provides a false sense of security.

¶12. (C) The Israeli side agreed with A/S DeSutter's point that we do not want a false sense of what is verifiable and what is not. They concurred with A/S DeSutter's points that intelligence should be stringently protected and should not be given away to countries that will not protect it. They

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also noted their agreement that we should not bother sharing information with other countries if they will not act after detecting noncompliance.

MEETING WITH ISRAELI THINK TANK

¶13. (U) One of Israel's most prestigious think tanks, the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), hosted a round table for ten Israelis featuring A/S DeSutter. In addition to INSS researchers, representatives of academia and members of other think tanks were invited. A/S DeSutter reviewed the Compliance Diplomacy points noted above, and in addition a variety of issues were raised by the participants.

¶14. (U) INSS Senior Researcher Ephraim Asculai discussed how he believed Iran would be willing to close down its nuclear weapons program for the right price. He said he did not believe military action would work in Iran because we do not know if they have a parallel secret nuclear program at sites unknown. He emphasized implementing strict sanctions on Iran, not selling anything but food and medicine, and preventing Iranians from travel. He also emphasized that time was short and it was very important to do as much as we can now to stop Iran's nuclear program.

¶15. (SBU) A/S DeSutter reported that many countries believe the United States is chomping at the bit to go to war with Iran. She is not convinced that a military strike will work because she does not believe the nuclear program we know

about in Iran is the full Iranian program. A/S DeSutter also agreed that time is not on our side and that strict sanctions need to be implemented targeting Iran's leadership. Asculai noted that Iran has already produced hundreds of tons of uranium hexafluoride, so even if we destroyed one facility it would be too late and of little benefit.

¶16. (U) INSS Senior Research Fellow David Friedman, an expert in biological weapons (BW), discussed how 90-100 percent of the nonproliferation efforts in Israeli academia are devoted to the nuclear issue. While this is the main problem, it is not the only problem. He believed the United States has the budget to work across the board, while Israel is fiscally limited. Friedman reported that technological advances of the past few years and those to come in the next few years make biological warfare an area that cannot be ignored. He also discussed how he has difficulties with the United States position on a verification regime for the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). He agreed verification is very difficult, especially in the area of BW, but argued that such a regime is necessary.

¶17. (U) A/S DeSutter responded that she too agrees that BW is a big threat. There are not enough analysts in the field, and, while recognition of the threat has grown, the challenges remain. She discussed how virtually everything in the bio field is dual-use, which complicates matters. The main challenge is determining intent, i.e., is the item being purchased or produced for peaceful or military use? She noted that the two lead countries pushing for a BWC verification regime are Iran and Russia. She discussed how onsite inspections can only tell you what is going on at that one site at that given time, and only to the degree that inspectors can determine whether an activity has an offensive goal. Such visits may be able to provide documentation of what the inspected party wants you to see, but cannot with any degree of confidence allow you to know what is happening at other times or locations. As a result, it is not possible to make compliance judgments based on such visits. In addition, the BWC verification regime would have given access to other countries' proprietary information, and would have opened the door to free trade among members, many of whom may have illicit programs. She expressed her desire to have an effective BW verification approach, but said that science does not yet offer that possibility. Mr. Friedman reported that in several weeks Israel would enact a law designed to provide oversight for research dealing with pathogenic agents. It will not limit publications, but will provide oversight of research proposals.

¶18. (U) INSS Senior Researcher and Tel Aviv University Professor Yair Evron asked if the United States could not coordinate better with Russia on missile defense. He thought perhaps the United States still had a Cold War mentality. He also questioned whether U.S. policy was to impose regime

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change on countries such as North Korea. A/S DeSutter replied that, first, the United States views the Cold War as being over and has moved all of its resources away from this area. Second, the United States is not pursuing regime change with North Korea, but change on the part of the regime.

COMPLIANCE DIPLOMACY WITH JUNIOR OFFICERS

¶19. (U) A/S DeSutter also extended her Compliance Diplomacy outreach to U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv's junior officers' New Professionals Association, which featured her as the first in a series of distinguished guest speakers. A/S DeSutter spoke on the common points presented in her other meetings relating to the role, history, and purpose of the VCI Bureau. She also reviewed the importance of and challenges to compliance, and asked her Senior Advisor, Julie Connor, to speak as a senior Foreign Service Officer about service in the Bureau.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

¶20. (C) A/S DeSutter took advantage of her stay in Israel to have additional meetings: (1) The Director of Bar Ilan University's Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Professor Efraim Inbar, gave A/S DeSutter a strategic tour of Jerusalem, emphasizing the proximity of Palestinian towns to Jerusalem, and recounting attacks on the city. (2) U.S. military officers gave the A/S a briefing on the new radar site in the Negev, explaining its capabilities. (3) A/S DeSutter met with U.S. Ambassador Cunningham to review her visit and plans while in Israel and to hear his thoughts on U.S.-Israel strategic relations.

¶21. (U) A/S DeSutter has cleared on this cable.

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